



# NEWS RELEASE

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## ***Storm Shelter Funding Announced By USDA Rural Development***

**Topeka, KS.** – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks announced today that the Agency will offer 2006 funding for the state's *Rural Storm Shelter Program*. This program provides low interest loans to help finance storm shelters for very-low income homeowners living in rural Kansas.

"Severe weather can strike unexpectedly, often with serious personal consequences. As Kansans know, violent storms and the unfortunate loss of life underscore the need for improved home safety measures. The installation of an approved storm shelter will offer Kansans added safety and security whenever severe weather strikes. The *Rural Storm Shelter Program* provides eligible homeowners an excellent opportunity to protect themselves and their families," commented State Director Banks.

Eligibility requirements for this program include: family income must be below 50% of the median income for the county of residence; the home must be owned and occupied by the applicant; and the property must be located in a rural area or a rural community of less than 20,000. All storm shelters financed by USDA Rural Development must also meet FEMA standards in design, construction and installation.

State Director Banks encourages homeowners interested in the Agency's *Rural Storm Shelter Program* to contact their local USDA Rural Development office, or they may call the state headquarters at 785-271-2720. Application deadline for the Fiscal Year 2006 funding of the *Rural Storm Shelter Program* is August 15, 2006.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increased economic opportunity and improved quality of life for rural residents. As a venture capital entity, the Agency provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America.

For information regarding USDA Rural Development's programs, contact the Agency at 785-271-2700 or visit the Agency's Kansas website at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks)

**USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the future of rural communities***